4: Villa Rojas E-4, 5 (1938-1944) 1969
NV9 Tzeltal NV9

175 177 648 [166] *dation of the Spanish dominance* lasted from 1545 (when Fray Bartolomé de las Casas arrived with 17 Dominican friars) until 1600. During this period a vast movement of population took place characterized by changes in location of some towns, reductions, and congregations.

During the entire 17th and early 18th centuries, the *period of slavery and royal land grants*, Indians were subjected to heavy tributes and to forced labor on the plantations and in transporation systems of the encomenderos, as *tememes* or carriers. Great caravans of 300–400 Indians, at the command of 10 or 12 Spaniards, transported goods the 1000 km. from San Cristobal de las Casas to Veracruz. Many died from excessive loads and lack of food (B. Metzger, 1960, p. 19).

175 177 648 797 From about 1720 to about 1850 may be considered the *period of resurgence and autonomy of the Indian community*, when the system of royal land grants was suppressed, the Order of Dominicans was weakened, and Spanish authority became relaxed and even indifferent. Bishop Polanco sent a report in 1781 to the Royal Court of Justice of Guatemala, complaining of the abandonment of the Indians (Trens, 1942, p. 200).

> It is wondrous that in the town of Chamula, contiguous to Ciudad Real, Indians have need of interpreter to defend themselves or to beg for what they desire. So that they are as they were twenty years after their conquest; in such a state of blindness and ignorance they find themselves. In the town of San Andres, next to Chamula, there are many saints, old and indecent, whom I thought of burying; I did not do it because those evil souls say that they make them see clearly and alleviate their needs. I suspected a riot without having assistance. . . . Oh, my Lord, their audacity and shamelessness are such that they even come to command in the church, without respect for the priest. They hold to the idea that the third person of the Holy Trinity is the Sun, because, they say, it was thus taught to them by the old fathers.

[P. 198-A]

4: Villa Rojas E-4, 5 (1938-1944) 1969
NV9 Tzeltal NV9

175 177 648 797 The mistakes, lack of attention and pretensions of the Indians in regard to the Christian doctrine, who they say they know, and the ones instructed best in them, say as many heretic words as Christian, is consequence or necessary sequel of the lack of care in the secular and ecclesiastical government.

This situation became more and more acute owing largely to the political unrest which absorbed the attention of the authorities, unrest which culminated in the separation of Chiapas from Guatemala and in 1824 its incorporation with Mexico.

175 177 648 The next period, *invasion of lands by Ladinos*, extends from about 1850 to 1911, when the first sparks of the Mexican Revolution reached Chiapas. In this period Ladinos began to invade lands of the Indian communities by bribery or by force. Toward 1856 the Indians complained against the invasion of lands in San Martin, San Miguel Mitontic, San Pedro Chenalo, Cuncuc, and Tenejapa, but failed to halt Ladino inroads (Trens, 1942, pp. 274–75).

The history of recent times, from 1920 on, is marked by increasing support from federal authorities throughout the entire [178] republic. In the Tzeltal area progress has been slow but constantly improving (see LaFarge, 1940; Beals, 1951).

Ethnographic Studies of the Region

114 [101] In his first trip through the Mayance area in 1839 and 1840, Stephens (1841) visited the northern zone of the Tzeltal, from Ocosingo to Yajalon, going through Bachajon and Chilon.

Traveling the same route two decades later in the opposite direction, the French explorer Désiré Charnay recorded his impressions in a small book (1863).

In 1901 Frederick Starr (1902), from the University of Chicago, made a short visit to the region.

In 1925 Blom and LaFarge traversed from north to south a large part of Tzeltal territory, publishing their data in three chapters of their *Tribes and Temples* (1926–

[P. 198-B]

794 the calpul must have a powerful nagual, through which they can learn about the private lives of their subordinates. This is usually the way they know who has enough money to pay for a feast, who can occupy special jobs, and which sinners deserve punishment.

Religious Life

The Catholic Cult

177 797 795 The beliefs and religious practices introduced by Catholic missionaries in the 16th century have been adapted to the aboriginal culture. The largest and most important 795 778 building of the village is the church, situ- [346] ated on the east side of the ceremonial cen- [361] ter. In it are the image of the patron saint [776] of the group, the holy cross, and lesser [796] saints. The most profound ceremonies take [794] place before the altar of these saints, who are looked upon as mediators between God and men, and are performed by the cabildos de misa, dzunubiles, and other elderly men of high rank who know both Catholic and Indian ritual.

346 796 795 During the ceremonies the altar is decorated with flowers and with paper and ribbons of different colors. The floor is covered with pine needles, which give off an agree- [782] able fragrance. Candles and copal are part of every prayer and ceremony, the copal having been used since pre-Hispanic times.

795 782 Common prayers of people who visit the center also have a place. These people have to enter the church and make an offering of candles to the patron saint. The prayers follow a formal pattern but vary in content according to the need and mood of the supplant. Each individual talks intimately to the saint, specifying the help he needs, much as he would to a relative or a friend in whom he has absolute confidence. The two most frequent matters of petition are health and food; as the latter depends almost entirely on the condition of the cornfield, people pray that "if may not be damaged by the wind, or by cold, sun, birds, or plagues."

[P 221-A]

?: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

Conflict among Religious Functionaries

Conflict in the religious domain stems from the opposition of the traditional religious hierarchy and more recently that of the young leadership in the civil authority to the increasing power of the priest. In this conflict the fiscal is a middleman who often gets knocked by both sides.

The priest. The priest visits thirty other Indian communities of the department of San Cristóbal Las Casas in addition to Tzo?ontahal. In the fifteen years he has been working regularly in this town, he has gained increasing authority over the cofrades. He is assisted by two lay sisters who maintain the church and lead the evening prayers in his absence. He admits that, without them, his own work in the town would be more difficult because of the sexual jealousy of the townsmen. His relationship to the group of about forty *resadoras,* or female prayer-makers, who attend the evening prayers regularly and are the most vocal respondents in the mass, would be suspect without the presence of the lay sisters.

The priest tries to play the role of parish leader as well as spiritual leader. When medicine is available from missionary sources, he gives it to the sick. In his sermons, he advises people to use injections, which he makes available, against contagious diseases. He attempts to counsel the people, advising them not to kill, to steal, or to have illegal sexual affairs. In his role as pastor, the priest is influenced by missionary efforts of American Catholic organizations which have sent supplies to the area.

In recent years, the priest has challenged the authority of the head cofrade in activities occurring within and at the door of the church. The following incident, recounted by the son of the elder cofrade, marked a shift in control in these domains:

In 1961 the elder cofrade of Sacramento was drinking with the other mayordomos at the door of the church. The priest came out and demanded that they stop because this was the house of God. The elder replied that it was the custom of the pueblo, and he and the other men refused to leave. The priest went back into the church and returned with a gun in his hand. The mayordomos seized wood which they had gathered

175 Thus, the village of Aguacatenango was created by joining the
361 parcialidades of Aguacatenango and Quesaltepec, while Amatenango
627
648 was composed of the parcialidades of Amatenango and Sacatepec. It is not possible at present to identify more closely the social groups that the Spaniards called parcialidades.

[797] It is probable that each parcialidad was composed of several lineages and clans, but up to the present time no one has done a comparative study of name distributions on available censuses or other similar materials, nor has any record been found, which explains the procedures used by the Dominican Friars (who controlled the reducciones in the area) when they reorganized
175 the populations of the territory.[1] In central Mexico the term
197
621 parcialidad refers, in the primary sources, to the four divisions of Tenochtitlan, the Aztec Capital, but they also refer to the
175 barrios or calpuls (Caso, A., 1959). In Chiapas it is normally
621 used to mean the sub-divisions of pueblos reducidos. It is known,
648 however, that the parcialidades were originally separate groups of people which were independent social units. Even after the reducciones they kept important elements of their organization separate, including their political officers, who were responsible for complying with demands made by the Spaniards for tribute and labor. Some of the separate political functions have been re-
174 tained up to the present. It is also safe to assume that each one
621 of the parcialidades was an endogamous group; both Aguacatenango

---

[1] The new documents are still unavailable. They have been reported by Edward Calnek in the National Archives in Guatemala, and by Dr. Vicenta Cortez in the Madrid Archives, Spain.